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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [QA](#)

SUBJECT: QATAR PROPOSES HAMAS-FATAH RECONCILIATION IN ABBAS
MEETING - PALESTINIAN AMBASSADOR TO QATAR

Classified By: Ambassador Joseph E. LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b and d).

(C) KEY POINTS

-- During the recent visit of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to Doha, his first in more than two years, Qatar's leadership urged the formation of a Hamas-Fatah national unity government, according to Palestinian Ambassador Munir Abdulla Ghannam, who met with Ambassador February 25.

-- According to Ghannam, the GOQ also urged a Hamas-Fatah reconciliation during the recent visit of Hamas leader Mahmoud al-Zahar.

-- Ghannam noted that many members of Hamas would reject any working relationship with Fatah, given that many in Hamas view the concession of any Muslim land as an affront to Islam.

(C) COMMENTS

-- Regardless of the Palestinian ambassador's comments, Qatar's reported support for a unity government and Hamas-Fatah reconciliation should not be considered a harbinger of any diminution in Qatar's support for Hamas.

End Key Points and Comments.

[¶1.](#) (C) In a February 25 meeting with Ambassador, Palestinian Ambassador Munir Abdullah Ghannam said that during a recent trip to Doha by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, the GOQ urged the formation of a national unity government in Palestine which would include Hamas members. According to Ghannam, it criticized Hamas for entering the government and then working to undermine its goals, and said that the members of any future government, including Hamas, must accept the goals of the peace process.

[¶2.](#) (C) The Abbas visit, his first in more than two years, came soon after a similiar visit by Hamas co-founder Mahmoud al-Zahar. Ghannam was told informally by GOQ officials that they advised al-Zahar to seek reconciliation, first with Egypt with a view toward opening the Gaza border, and then with Fatah. Qatari officials also told al-Zahar that Hamas would receive no direct financial support for the reconstruction of Gaza.

[¶3.](#) (C) Ghannam observed that it would be very difficult for Hamas to work with Fatah, given that the latter recognizes Israel's right to exist. It was possible, he said, to lure away some Hamas members who use religion to advance their quest for political power. Those who view the concession of "even a square inch" of the former Palestine to Israel as an affront to Islam, would be loathe to join in a government of national unity dedicated to the peace process.

14. (C) The goal of the PA, according to Ghannam, is to rebuild Gaza. As long as the efforts of the international community are effective, he said, it is not important how the reconstruction aid is delivered. He praised the recent efforts by GCC members to forge a common approach to Gaza aid in advance of the March 2 conference in Sharm al Sheikh. He warned that no aid should go directly to Hamas, however, stating that the money would not be used for reconstruction. He also pointed out that direct aid would send the signal that the international community was softening its position on Hamas.

LeBaron